

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail
2 account comprising the steps of:
3 providing an e-mail service system for receiving and routing e-mails to the at
4 least one e-mail account;
5 providing an independent e-mail provider for receiving and routing e-mails to
6 the at least one independent e-mail account;
7 interrogating the independent e-mail account on the independent e-mail
8 provider from the e-mail service system to route and receive e-mail messages in the
9 independent e-mail account to an e-mail account on the e-mail service system;
10 maintaining for each e-mail account an exception list of authorized addressers
11 identified by at least their e-mail addresses;
12 providing a payment service system in cooperative operation with the said e-
13 mail service system for executing a required payment from a unauthorized e-mail sender to
14 assure delivery of e-mail to an intended recipient ;
15 receiving e-mail at the e-mail service system from an addresser and comparing
16 the address of the addresser of the e-mail to the maintained exception list of the intended
17 recipient's account;
18 upon finding the address of the addresser of the e-mail on the exception list,
19 forwarding the e-mail to the intended recipient;
20 upon not finding the address of the addresser of the e-mail on the exception
21 list, checking with the payment service system to see if the addresser has made at least the
22 required payment for forwarding an e-mail to the intended recipient.;
23 upon finding that the addresser has made at least the required payment for
24 forwarding an e-mail to the intended recipient, forwarding the e-mail to the intended
25 recipient; and,
26 upon not finding that the addresser has made at least the required payment for
27 forwarding an e-mail to the addressee, informing the addresser by e-mail that, without the
28 required payment, forwarding an e-mail message from an addresser who is not on the
29 addressee's exception list will not occur.

1 2. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail
2 account according to claim 1 and wherein the step of, upon not finding that the addresser has

made at least the required payment for forwarding an e-mail to the addressee, informing the addresser by e-mail that, without the required payment, forwarding an e-mail message from an addresser who is not on the addressee's exception list will not occur occurs directly from e-mail service system to the sender of the original e-mail.

3. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail account according to claim 1 and wherein the step of, upon not finding that the addresser has made at least the required payment for forwarding an e-mail to the addressee, informing the addresser by e-mail that, without the required payment, forwarding an e-mail message from an addresser who is not on the addressee's exception list will not occur occurs from e-mail service system to the sender of the original e-mail through the independent e-mail provider.

4. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail account according to claim 1 and including an additional step of:
upon receiving and forwarding a reply e-mail from the addressee of a previous e-mail to the addresser of the previous e-mail, reversing the payment made by the sender of the previous e-mail if the sender of the previous e-mail made the required payment to assure the delivery of the previous e-mail to its addressee and the said reply e-mail is sent within a predetermined period of time.

5. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail account according to claim 1 and including an additional step of:
upon receiving and executing a request from the addressee of an e-mail to add to his exception list the address of the addresser who made at least the required payment to assure the delivery of the said e-mail to its addressee, reversing the payment made by the addresser if the said request from the addressee is made within a predetermined period of time.

6. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail account according to claim 1 and wherein the step of maintaining an exception list for each e-mail account includes:
providing the capability to add all or some of the addresses in the account holder's address book in the independent e-mail provider to the exception list.

1 7. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail
2 account according to claim 1 and wherein the step of maintaining an exception list for each e-
3 mail account includes:

4 providing the capability to manually add addresses to or delete addresses from
5 the exception list.

1 8. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail
2 account according to claim 1 and wherein the step of providing a payment service system in
3 cooperative operation with the said e-mail service system for executing a required payment
4 from a unauthorized e-mail sender to assure delivery of his e-mail to an intended recipient
5 includes:

6 providing at least one electronic form with at least one field of entry for the
7 account holder's e-mail service provider to set the amount of the required payment for
8 delivery of an e-mail from an unauthorized addresser to the said account holder's e-mail
9 account.

1 9. The method for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail
2 account according to claim 1 and including an additional step of:

3 providing at least one electronic form with at least one field of entry where the
4 addressee can provide password, ID, and other necessary information of the independent
5 email account with the independent e-mail provider such that the step of interrogating the
6 independent e-mail account at the independent e-mail provider from the e-mail service
7 system to route and receive e-mail messages in the independent e-mail account to an e-mail
8 account on the e-mail service system can occur.

1 10. Apparatus for blocking unauthorized e-mail to at least one e-mail
2 recipient comprising:

3 an e-mail service system for receiving and routing e-mails to the at least one e-
4 mail recipient;

5 an exception list of authorized addresses for e-mail recipients maintained at
6 the e-mail service system;

7 an independent e-mail provider;

means for interrogating the independent e-mail provider from the e-mail service system whereby received e-mail messages in the independent e-mail account with the independent e-mail provider is routed to the e-mail account on the e-mail service system;

a payment service system for executing a required payment from a unauthorized e-mail sender to assure delivery of e-mail to an intended recipient ;

the e-mail service system including means for receiving e-mail from an addresser and comparing the address of the addresser of the e-mail to the maintained exception list including means upon finding the address of the addresser of the e-mail on the exception list, forwarding the e-mail to the recipient,

an interactive connection between the e-mail service system and the payment service system to enable the e-mail service system upon not finding the address of the addresser of the e-mail on the exception list to interact with the payment service system to see if the addresser has made at least a payment required for forwarding an e-mail to the addressee from an addresser who is not on the exception list of the addressee.;

means at the e-mail service system upon finding that the addresser has made at least the required payment for forwarding an e-mail to the addressee; and,

means at the e-mail service system upon not finding that the addresser has made at least the required payment for forwarding an e-mail to the addressee from an addresser who is not on the exception list of the addressee to informing the addresser by e-mail of the required payment for forwarding an e-mail message to the addressee.